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NASD VIEQUES
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VIEQUES CLEAN UP NEWS REGARDING THE UNDERWATER INVESTIGATION
UNDERWAY AND THE RESTORATION ADVISORY BOARD (RAB) MEETING TO BE HELD
ON 20 MAY 2015 (ENGLISH VERSION) VIEQUES ISLAND PUERTO RICO
05/01/2015
CH2M HILL

VIEQUES

Clean-up News



www.navfac.navy.mil/vieques
MAY 2015

Underwater Investigation Underway

The investigation for underwater munitions off the western tip of Vieques is well underway. The underwater area is adjacent to Solid Waste Management Unit (SWMU) 4, where excess munitions were burned and detonated until the late 1970s. The primary objective of the investigation is to determine if munitions associated with past activities at SWMU 4 are present offshore. To achieve this objective, specialized underwater munitions divers are searching the sea floor across a 200-acre area with the aid of metal detectors. The information gathered during the investigation will be used to estimate the quantity and distribution of underwater munitions and munitions-related debris, the types of munitions and debris present, the potential hazards the material poses, and to help plan any future investigation or clean-up. The investigation is anticipated to be completed by June 2015, after which a report of the findings will be prepared. Once the report is finalized, it will be available to the public and a summary of the findings will be included in a future edition of Vieques Clean-up News.



Munitions divers conducting underwater investigation.

Get Involved

- ✓ Attend the quarterly RAB meetings to hear about the latest cleanup activities, ask questions, and provide input. The next RAB meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 6:00 PM at the Vieques Multiple Use Center (across from the plaza).

Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) Meeting May 20, 2015 — *New Members are Invited to Join the RAB!*

The next meeting of the Vieques RAB will be Wednesday, May 20, 2015 from 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. at the Vieques Multiple Use Center (across from the Plaza). RAB meetings are open to the public and are presented simultaneously in English and Spanish. The RAB, which has been meeting quarterly since 2004, provides a forum for community input and participation in the Vieques cleanup. At the end of 2014, two new community members joined the RAB.

Additional information about the RAB can be found on the Navy's website at <http://www.navfac.navy.mil/vieques>. If you are interested in becoming a RAB member, contact Madeline Rivera, U.S. Navy Vieques Site Manager, by telephone at 787-741-4792 or email at madeline.rivera@navy.mil.



911 or (787) 741-2020



Vieques community members, regulatory agencies and the Navy participated in the Faro Berdiales opening event on March 4.



Area Surrounding Puerto Ferro Lighthouse is Open to the Public

The public can once again visit the Puerto Ferro Lighthouse, known as Faro Berdiales, and the adjacent beach. Because of the building's condition, access inside the lighthouse is not permitted. On March 4, 2015, more than 250 people, including about 60 students and representatives from the Vieques Conservation and Historical Trust, Navy, EQB, and EPA attended an opening ceremony hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

This is a high priority site for the Vieques community because of the cultural significance of the historic Spanish lighthouse. To accelerate public access to the area around the lighthouse and adjacent beach, the Navy performed an interim removal action to ensure those areas are clear of munitions. An important part of the removal action was the installation of signs and educational kiosks that inform visitors where it is safe to go and clearly identify areas that remain restricted from public access.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why are there so many signs about explosive risks at Faro Berdiales? Since it has reopened for public access, I thought it was safe.

A. Public safety is the highest priority for the Navy and agencies involved in the Vieques cleanup, and the area at the Lighthouse and adjacent beach are safe to visit. However, other areas of UXO 15 (Península Puerto Ferro) are still under investigation, so the warning signs are meant help visitors understand where public access is allowed and where public access is prohibited.



Public Comment Opportunity Planned for Munitions Removal Action at UXO 15 and Adjacent Puerto Ferro

In the summer of 2015, the public will have an opportunity to comment on the Navy's plan for an interim removal action at a site known as PI-9 East, which is located within UXO 15 (Península Puerto Ferro), as well as immediately offshore in Puerto Ferro (see figure). The removal action will address munitions that are encrusted in the limestone along the shoreline and just offshore, likely dropped there during munitions transfer operations associated with military training activities.

The evaluation of alternatives to address munitions at PI-9 East will be presented in an Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) report that will be made available for public comment prior to conducting the removal action. Once the EE/CA is ready for public comment, an announcement will be published in Primera Hora, at which time the document will be available for review on the Navy's website and at the EPA Vieques Field office.



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